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Normative Power and EU Arms Transfer Policy: A Theoretical Critique and Empirical Test[1]

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Normative Macht und die EU-Waffenlieferungspolitik: Eine theoretische Kritik und ein empirischer Test

Waffenexporte sind sowohl eine ökonomische Notwendigkeit für die europäische Waffenindustrie als auch ein potenzielles Hindernis für die entstehende normative Macht der Europäischen Union (EU) im Weltgeschehen. Tatsächlich gibt es in der Ära nach dem Kalten Krieg die größten Waffenmärkte oft in Staaten, die entweder miteinander in Konflikt stehen oder in hohem Maß interne Repression aufweisen – also genau in jenen Ländern, in denen die EU auf der normativen Ebene ihrer politischen Agenda danach strebt, Frieden zu stiften, für Stabilität zu sorgen und die Einhaltung der Menschenrechte voranzutreiben. Trotz dieser eklatanten Widersprüche gibt es sehr wenig wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen darüber, inwieweit Waffenlieferungen der EU deren moralisch-normativen Rhetoriken reflektieren. Dieser Beitrag versucht, die vorhandene theoretische und empirische Lücke zu füllen. Anhand einer Regressionsanalyse untersucht die Autorin das Verhältnis von EU-Waffenexporten und Menschenrechten, Konflikten und demokratischer Entwicklung in den Empfängerländern zwischen 1990 und 2004. Eine Fallstudie über die Debatte zur Aufhebung des Waffenembargos gegen China dient einer tiefer gehenden Analyse der Politik hinter den europäischen Waffenlieferungen. Die Ergebnisse beider Analysen machen klar, dass es für ein Verständnis der EU-Außenpolitik notwendig ist, materielle Interessen und normative Bedenken gemeinsam zu untersuchen. Die Ergebnisse legen außerdem die Vermutung nahe, dass der geringe Grad einer EU-Sozialisation und die Dominanz nationaler Interessen und Wertvorstellungen die Herausbildung einer homogenen europäischen Identität im Außenverhältnis erschweren dürften.

ABSTRACT

Arms transfers are both an economic necessity for the European arms industry and a potential obstacle for the emerging normative power role of the European Union (EU) in world affairs. Indeed, the biggest markets for arms exports in the post-Cold War era are often in states engaged in conflict or high levels of internal repression – precisely where the EU's normative policy agenda seeks to promote peace, stability, and respect for human rights. Despite these glaring contradictions, however, research on how well the EU's arms transfer behavior mirrors its normative power rhetoric has been largely absent. This article attempts to fill this theoretical and empirical void. I use regression analysis to examine the relationship between EU arms exports and the human rights, conflict, and democracy records of recipient states from 1990 to 2004. A case study of the debate to lift the arms embargo to China provides a more in-depth assessment of the politics behind EU arms transfers. Both analyses highlight the need to consider material interests and normative concerns in tandem in order to understand EU foreign policy. The findings also suggest that low levels of EU socialization and the predominance of domestic interests and values may hinder the creation of a single European external identity.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The political landscape of global arms transfers[1] has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War. In the reduced-threat security environment of the 1990s, national and international demand for arms plummeted, just as an abundance of cheap surplus weapons from the former Eastern Bloc hit the market. At the same time, the international community began to pursue efforts to stem the flow of arms to unstable and conflict-prone areas around the world. As a result, many states have been faced with the conflicting pressures of upholding arms control initiatives while supporting the survival of their arms industries through export promotion. In Europe, arms exports are particularly problematic. Small domestic markets and shrinking defense budgets have placed European arms industries under severe pressure to export in order to survive in a global market dominated by the United States. Yet as the European Union (EU) seeks to strengthen its position in international affairs as a civilian or normative power, the contradictions become especially glaring. Although the EU aspires to solve international problems and spread certain "universal" values, such as peace and human rights, arms transfers can undermine these goals and with them, EU credibility. In particular, the recent debate to lift the EU arms embargo to China has raised questions both about the EU's commitment to human rights in the face of lucrative markets and about its effectiveness as an international actor more generally.

According the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), combined arms exports from the EU in the period 2001-2005 accounted for 27 percent of the total global arms trade, placing it behind only Russia and the United States (SIPRI, 2006: 450-458). However, such numbers fly in the face of Europe's stated commitment to foreign policy goals of peace, human rights, and non-proliferation. Scholars of arms transfers to the developing world overwhelmingly conclude that arms purchases have a strong negative impact on peace and security, human rights, and development in those regions (Blanton, 1999, 2001; Craft and Smaldone, 2002; Sislin and Pearson, 2001; Smith and Tasiran, 2005). Nevertheless, as Elise Keppler (2001) observes, until recently little effort has been made to subject the conventional arms trade to even minimal standards of accountability (382). Noting the widespread negative effects of small arms sales alone, she states:

> [T]he prevalence of small arms in contemporary conflicts has had devastating consequences for civilians. Recent civil strife has led to increased civilian casualties, displacement, refugee outflows, and human rights abuses, thus undermining relief and reconstruc-

1 The term "arms transfers" includes the sale, aid, and gift of arms and provides a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the exchange of weapons than merely examining sales. I use the term interchangeably with "arms exports" and refer only to the exchange of conventional arms.

> tion efforts at an unparalleled rate. The culture of violence created by small arms flows in post-conflict societies also has made civilians the targets of increased crime and lawlessness. Less direct effects, including poverty and failed development and reconstruction programs, also have been present in these contemporary wars (385-6).

Thus Europe's arms trade may simultaneously undermine its ability to achieve its foreign policy goals and its legitimacy as a normative power. As a result, European states are faced with the difficulty of striking a balance between sustaining their arms industries while avoiding exports to questionable recipients, even where demand might be higher. Yet how well the EU has been able to achieve such a balance in practice has been unclear.

While academic and policy circles have thoroughly dissected the state and fate of the European arms industry, whether the EU's arms export behavior lives up to its normative rhetoric is a question that remains unanswered and begs for empirical study. This paper examines the European arms trade at the nexus of its normative and economic power. It presents both a theoretical critique and an empirical test of the endurance of the normative power perspective when confronted by strong economic interests. I argue that material motives – often discounted by the normative power perspective – must be considered alongside normative constraints in order to understand the practice of European external relations. After reviewing the theoretical backdrop, I provide a statistical analysis of the impact of human rights on the EU's arms export behavior. I then move to a study of the China embargo debate as a critical case in which the EU's normative and economic goals come to a head and provide a cautionary tale for underplaying the role of material interests in its foreign policy. These findings, in turn, highlight serious challenges facing the development of a European identity, in light of weaknesses in EU-level socialization and the dominance of national interests and identities guiding member-state policy preferences.

NORMATIVE POWER AND MATERIAL INTEREST

As an international actor, Europe has continued to defy definition and spark political debate since the 1960s: Is Europe powerless without the backing of substantive military capabilities or simply endowed with a different kind of non-military power? While Europe's economic strength is undeniable, it has not been matched by an effective military capacity or consistent foreign policy. Instead, skeptics and believers alike have focused on Europe's role as a "civilian power" (Bull, 1982; Duchêne, 1972; Schonfield, 1974; Smith, 2000; Whitman, 1998) and, more recently, on the EU as a "normative power" (Manners, 2002, 2006; Sjursen, 2006; Youngs, 2005). Both concepts recognize Europe's potential as a global player based not on military power, but on its economic and diplomatic ability to achieve its foreign policy goals. However, while civilian power

deals primarily with the *means* of foreign policy, normative power includes its *ends*. That is, a normative power seeks ideological influence and the spread of norms outside its borders (Manners, 2002).

This paper examines the latter characterization of the EU, recognizing that the promotion of human rights through arms exports stems from a normative foreign policy agenda. However, the paper takes this literature two steps further: First, it adds an empirical study of the EU's normative power in practice. Second, it integrates normative and material perspectives, arguing that EU interests often encompass both, even on the same issue area. On their own, each is too narrow in its conception of interests and, as a result, severely limited in their ability to account for European foreign relations. Constructivism views state's interests as fundamentally shaped by their identities and shared social norms. As such, it is best equipped to explain cases in which states act against obvious material interests in favor of normative concerns. Yet it is too optimistic to assume this will always, or even frequently, be the case; norm violation must also be explained. Rationalism often discards normative behavior as mere cover for more powerful material motives. In this sense, it is too rigid in its exclusion of non-material dimensions from its understanding of state interests. After reviewing each perspective, I argue that EU foreign policy cannot simply be put into a single theoretical box, but that it combines a complex array of interests, both normative and material, which complicate its search for a unified external identity.

Although the civilian power debate is long-standing,[2] the concept of the EU as a normative power has emerged only as integration has deepened throughout the 1990s, leading scholars to ask not whether the EU has a role in world affairs but how it plays its part.[3] Although questions persist about the ability of the EU to exert any real influence without the backing of military force (Therborn, 1997: 380), others contend that it is precisely such "soft diplomacy" that allows the EU to export its values around the world (Petiteville, 2003: 128). As the baseline for this discussion, Ian Manners (2002) defines normative power as the "ideational of impact of the EU's international role" (238) and identifies five "core" norms embodied in the framework of the EU, including peace, human rights, and democracy (242). Rather than focusing on material capabilities, he

2 Coining the term in 1972, François Duchêne observes that Europe has a unique ability to eschew force in favor of influence through economic and political strength. Hedley Bull (1982) faults this argument as overly idealistic. He argues that civilian power ultimately relies on military force, without which actors remain vulnerable and unable to act effectively in world affairs. Christopher Hill (1993) attributes this disagreement to a "capability-expectations gap" in that Europe's capabilities have been "talked up" to the point where it cannot meet expectations.

3 For a broader discussion of EU "actorness," see Bretherton and Vogler (2006).

contends, Europe's real power is ideational: "the ability to shape the concept of 'normal' in international relations" (239).

Manners supports his claims by observing the EU's largely successful efforts to abolish the death penalty worldwide.[4] Yet while the case is for the most part compelling, it has attracted substantial criticism as an argument on behalf of normative power more generally. Empirically, the death penalty may be an "easy" case, in which the norm already enjoyed an unusual degree of unanimity within the EU, making its projection more coherent and effective. As Toby King (1999) notes, the promotion of human rights in EU foreign policy has often been constrained by radical differences in the bilateral relations, state power, and international interests of member states (315). Extending the human rights norm to other areas may therefore prove problematic for the EU, in agreeing both on an internal interpretation and on how to proceed externally. Moreover, matters of foreign policy traditionally reserved for the national domain – including the arms trade – may lack the necessary common ground for a coherent policy to promote the EU's broader normative agenda.

Theoretically, moreover, the scope of the normative power perspective is too restricted. In taking an "either/or" view of EU identity, it implies that Europe acts with the sole collective purpose of promoting universal norms for the greater good of the international community. Yet this is too unidimensional (Bretherton and Vogler, 2006). The EU is a complex institution composed of diverse member states, each with their own interests and visions for foreign policy – the EU's and their own. By relying on the EU's rhetoric to confirm its intentions and behavior,[5] scholars risk biased findings confirming a view of EU external relations as it wants to be seen but may or may not actually be.

On the one hand, EU actions may not live up to its words. For example, King (1999) identifies a wide gulf between the rhetoric and reality of human rights in EU foreign policy (337). He shows that human rights feature prominently in EU statements, but actual responses to many crises have proven "minimal and ineffectual" (335). On the other hand, the intentions behind the EU's actions may be more complex than the normative power framework lets on. Richard Youngs (2004) acknowledges that the EU may exercise normative power, but often for instrumental – not value-driven – purposes. Instead, he finds that norms may simply "cloak" other motives to increase "the effective-

4 It should be noted that key states, including the United States, Japan, Russia, and China, have retained the death penalty. As a result, Europe's normative influence thus far appears to be limited to smaller states on this issue.

5 Helene Sjursen (2006) briefly notes this problem but dismisses it in favor of examining the legitimacy of the EU's normative power. While this is certainly a worthwhile research pursuit, it shortchanges – and perhaps even assumes away – the more fundamental question of whether European power merits such a characterization in the first place.

ness and legitimacy of external policies" (421). From this standpoint, the purpose of the EU's normative power is substantively different than envisioned by Manners, perhaps even calling into question the concept itself.

In stark contrast to the normative power perspective, other theories of EU politics include a key role for material interests. Reviewing the evolution of EU studies, Mark Pollack (2001) observes a striking "convergence around a single rationalist model which assumes fixed preferences and rational behavior among all actors in the EU" (222). These theories commonly attribute EU policy to national preferences, shaped by commercial interests, distributional conflicts, and bargaining power (Moravcsik, 1998; Schimmelfennig, 2001). Material interests – both military and economic – also affect EU foreign and security policy more specifically. Barry Posen (2004) contends that the European defense initiative is largely a response to US unipolarity to "develop an alternative security supplier" (12), while Philip Gordon (1997) notes that EU trade and foreign aid effectively serve its "long-term economic interests" (82). Conversely, Karen Smith (2006) finds that national interests often hinder the EU from acting as a strong international human rights leader. Unlike normative power Europe, this Europe does not find its raison d'être in a set of collective normative ideals, but rather is one whose internal and external relations are firmly anchored in the material interests of its member states.

At the same time, such accounts grossly overestimate the possibility of normative defection. By making material interests the default option, they suggest that states comply with norms primarily when it will be to their material benefit; compliance lacks compelling purpose otherwise. Moreover, even if states use norms to cloak their true materialist motivations, strictly materialist views cannot explain why such a strategy becomes or remains convincing. That is, the norm must acquire some inherent value and be matched by state action to make it an effective "excuse" for materialist behavior. However, beyond the compliance problem, this perspective neither allows the intellectual space for an independent value to international norms, nor offers an explanation for why one norm might carry greater currency than another at different points in time. As such, it provides limited guidance for questions in which state behavior appears motivated by a mixture of normative and material interest.

Consequently, as many scholars now recognize – but which the normative power perspective does not acknowledge – these clear theoretical divisions are often obscured in practice. Instead, neither material interests nor normative motives are on their own sufficient to explain state behavior.[6] European foreign policy in particular is frequently cited as a forum in which rationalist and constructivist approaches can learn from one

6 See, for example, Checkel (2001), Katzenstein et al. (1998), Katzenstein and Sil (2004), Zürn and Checkel (2005).

another both by nature and by necessity.[7] Thus Frank Schimmelfenning's (2001) rationalist work on EU enlargement must also reach out to constructivist concepts of rhetorical action and social norms to explain final policy outcomes. In general, rationalism alone has trouble explaining EU behavior contrary to its material interests and would be hard pressed to account for an arms trade favoring normative responsibility at the expense of badly needed profits and markets. At the same time, many constructivists note the salience of rationalism to explain the spread of international norms. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) observe a strong strategic and means-oriented calculus in the "highly politicized social construction of norms, preferences, identities, and common knowledge by norm entrepreneurs in world politics" (911). Arms transfers could, therefore, serve as a strategic tool to reach a normative end. However, it is also possible that the materialist and normative motivations of the arms trade undermine one another. Thus questions emerge as to where EU arms trade behavior falls on the spectrum from normative power to material interests and how these two seemingly contrary sets of interests can be reconciled – if at all.

This article addresses how well these perspectives capture the conduct of EU foreign relations. I argue that EU external identity must be considered in a framework that encompasses both the normative and materialist dimensions of its foreign policy. As the EU focuses greater resources on promoting its normative power and, more specifically, coordinating arms export decision-making, member behavior may well converge on this broader foreign policy vision. However, while EU members may share this general ideal, in practice the salience and interpretation of normative power vary from state to state.[8] This variation, I suggest, stems from enduring differences in domestic politics, determined by members' material and normative interests and national perceptions of their proper role in world affairs. Normative power will therefore exercise greater influence on members' policy positions when material interests are negligible or outweighed by prominent normative concerns. These conditions will be met most consistently in states whose identity is already grounded in normative power. In this context, moreover, I argue that EU decision-making rules will be highly relevant. Where internal divisions are deeply rooted in domestic interests and identities, unanimity requirements will encourage status-quo oriented decisions, while majority voting might favor the interests of the major powers, which are more multifaceted and may extend beyond the scope of the EU's normative power.

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7 See, for example, Checkel (2001, 2006); Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2002); M. Smith (2004); Zürn and Checkel (2005).

8 In fact, Zürn and Checkel (2005) conclude their special edition of International Organization on the topic of European socialization by noting that "the effects of socialization are often weak and secondary to dynamics at the national level" (1047).

As a long-time instrument of foreign policy, arms exports serve both Europe's normative agenda and its material interests. It is therefore an ambiguous area of EU external relations and a harder case for normative power. As described below, the arms trade has traditionally been a focus of economic gain for European states. However, arms transfers also wield normative power in two ways. First, arms transfers can provide the means for states to engage in conflict and internal repression. The denial of arms sales in response to a recipient's poor conduct can therefore limit its ability to wage war or repress its populace. Second, arms transfers symbolize friendship and signal tacit approval of an importer's behavior. Conversely, the denial of arms expresses disapproval and distances the exporting state from a recipient's questionable policies and practices. EU rhetoric strongly supports the link between human rights and arms transfers; however, its record in practice has not been examined and is the focus of the empirical study here.

EUROPEAN ARMS TRANSFERS

Arms transfers were used most prominently during the Cold War to gain political and strategic influence among client states in the East-West competition for power. Apart from a short-lived attempt to impose restrictions on arms sales by the Carter administration in the late 1970s, however, human rights and other internal characteristics of states were considered minor determinants of arms transfer policy at best. In fact, European arms producers, outside of the neutral states and West Germany, were better known for "sell to anyone" policies than adhering to any restrictive criteria. Pressures to export were often intense, resulting from concerns for domestic unemployment, balance of payments, and economies of scale within the industry itself. These pressures increased exponentially with the end of the Cold War, which brought with it major reductions in government military expenditures and weapons stockpiles across the advanced industrialized world. Given its intimate relationship with the state, the European arms industry[9] has suffered the effects of the resulting declines in investment, decreased demand, and oversupply both at home and abroad, leading to loss of sales, jobs, and profit opportunities. Because Europe has been slow to adopt regional procurement policies, the need to export continues to be unavoidable for European companies as a primary survival strategy.

Despite these weighty economic concerns, the EU has made progress in harmonizing export restrictions based on conditions in the importing country. The most prominent outcome of these efforts is the 1998 EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. It provides transparency and consultation mechanisms, as well as a detailed set of criteria

9 As Paul Cornish (1995) points out, while the label "European arms industry" is useful shorthand, it implies more homogeneity and unity than actually exists (44). The reality is that Europe's arms industry is relatively fragmented and perhaps more aptly termed "industries."

for export licensing, including respect for human rights and the preservation of peace and security, which all member states have agreed to apply.[10] While the Code is a political agreement and not legally binding,[11] four of its eight criteria are considered obligatory for the denial of licenses: risk of use for internal repression, provocation of internal conflict, aggression against another country, or contradiction of international commitments, including United Nations embargoes (Bauer, 2004; Davis, 2002).

In theory, the Code is fully consistent with Europe's efforts to establish itself as a normative power: transparent and accountable, cognizant of peace and human rights, and compliant with international law.[12] Accordingly, arms transfers should decline (or be non-existent) to recipients engaged in conflicts or repressive internal practices. This trend should strengthen over time, as the EU's common export criteria take hold and, along with it, member states' commitment to their normative power identity. Patterns should also emerge related to the recipient state's type of government. Although the Code of Conduct does not include democracy in its criteria, it is one of the "core norms" of the EU and an explicit focus of EU policy (European Commission, 2001; Manners, 2002). Thus as importers' strengthen democratic practices, EU exporters should prove more willing to send them arms.

In practice, however, the Code's potency has varied by member state and been highly subject to national interpretation. Countries with less restrictive regulations have resisted mandatory measures and further harmonization in order to reap economic benefits from more constraining policies in their competitors' home countries (Bauer, 2004: 137). Some scholars also question the commitment of the EU as a whole to arms control. In rhetoric and intentions, Herbert Wulf (2004) contends, Europe is a strong advocate of arms control and disarmament. However, its record of action is mixed:

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10 For the full text of the Code, see <http://www.sipri.org/contents/expcon/eucode.html> (last accessed February 2008).

11 Apart from cases in which states choose to integrate the Code into their national export legislation, the main exceptions are that (1) Council Regulation EC 1334/2000 makes the Code legally binding for dual-use goods and (2) the 2000 Framework Agreement binds signatories to take the Code into account "for exports of jointly produced armaments governed by the Treaty provisions" (Bauer, 2004:132).

12 Keppler (2001) notes increased international attention to controlling the conventional arms trade after the Cold War and a greater concern for the connection between arms transfers and human rights. In the US case, Blanton (2005) attributes this heightened sensitivity to the moral dimension of arms transfer policy to the end of the Cold War, which allowed policymakers to expand their conception of security to include human rights (649). In addition, without a clear military threat, it was more difficult "to justify publicly the export of arms to countries that abuse human rights or are non-democratic" (650). However, in the case of Europe, the initial impetus to develop regional controls resulted from the unfolding of world events more so than normative concerns: blowback from transfers to Iraq before the 1991 Gulf War, regulatory freedom brought on by the end of the bipolar system, increasing links within the European arms industry, the free movement of goods within Europe, and ongoing discussions of political integration (Davis, 2002:51-53).

> Compared to the European Union's policy declarations, the agenda of implementation measures for arms control and disarmament … is conspicuously short. Arms control initiatives or unilateral national disarmament measures have been almost completely absent in recent years. If disarmament takes place or when new weapon programs are cancelled or postponed it is not based on an arms control or disarmament policy but the result of sheer financial necessity (118).

From this perspective, the predominance of an ethical arms trade is better described as a rhetorical pleasantry than any hard fact of reality. In practice, other factors are more likely to drive the European arms trade, such as economic opportunity and alliance relationships. This should perhaps not even come as a surprise. After all, as Bretherton and Vogler (2006) state, "The EU is above all an economic power, and trade provides the foundation of its actorness" (62), just as exports are essential to the survival of the European arms industry.

A series of alternative hypotheses therefore emerge. Arms transfers motivated by economic incentives should increase as levels of conflict and repression, and therefore recipient demand, increase. Similarly, countries more willing and able to invest in arms procurement are more likely to receive European arms exports, whatever their human rights records. Finally, realists would expect allies to export to one another most often. In this way, states can confine the spread of positive security externalities from trade to the importers that pose the least threat to them (Gowa, 1994). Thus while the EU may talk big, its arms trade behavior may be governed by more practical considerations, not subject to criteria that would only bring about a dramatic reduction in markets available to sustain production in either the short or long term.

Nevertheless, this neglect sits uncomfortably with the EU's image as a normative power. The EU declares itself "a force for stability, cooperation and understanding in the wider world" and promotes human rights, development and conflict prevention as basic elements of its external relations (European Commission, 2004: 4, 7, 12). Yet research suggests that arms transfers to the developing world constrain democratization, facilitate internal repression, and limit human development, while increasing the possibility of conflict (Blanton, 1999, 2001; Craft and Smaldone, 2002; Small Arms Survey, 2005; Sislin and Pearson, 2001; Smith and Tasiran, 2005; United Nations, 1997). Thus, it appears that Europe's need to support its arms industry, which relies heavily on exports, coexists with very different – even contradictory – foreign policy goals. Questions therefore remain: Do EU members follow the Code of Conduct in their export practices, or are they more responsive to market demands with minimal attention to the human rights of their import partners? The next sections provide an initial answer.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data and Model

Although the EU has explicitly connected human rights to its arms transfer policy, how well its rhetoric matches its practice has not been explored.[13] To recap, the normative power perspective expects norm-compliant behavior by EU exporters respecting criteria for human rights, democracy, and conflict over time. In contrast, more materialist-based theories are skeptical of the role of EU norms in influencing arms transfer behavior and instead expect economic incentives to outweigh normative considerations. The goal of this section is to assess the relationship between European arms transfers and the characteristics of the recipient states and their human rights record in particular. To do so, I use logistic regression to examine the arms transfers (dependent variable) of the nine largest arms exporters in Europe[14] and specific traits (independent variables) of 189 importing states from 1990-2004.[15] In addition to human rights, I include democracy, alliance, GDP per capita, conflict, military expenditures, and an interaction term for China's human rights record, which I discuss in the case study section.

Using transfers of both small and major conventional arms, I create a single dichotomous variable to indicate whether a transfer took place from a specific exporting country to a specific importing country in each year. Thus, if a transfer of either type of weapon is recorded, the export-import dyad for that year is coded as one; no transfer is coded as zero. While this coding does not capture the quantity and value of transfers, it contains the information of primary interest here: whether one state exports arms to another. I then lag the dependent variable one year (*transferlag*) in order to allow time for information about conditions in the recipient state to reach export decision-makers in the supplier state, who then have the opportunity to adjust their behavior accordingly (Blanton, 2005; Meernik et al., 1998). Thus transfers that took place in 2004 are dependent on conditions in the recipient country in 2003 and so on.

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13 Although the relationship between US arms sales and human rights has been studied (most notably Blanton, 2005), similar quantitative studies of the European arms trade are to date sorely lacking from the literature.

14 The dataset covers the nine EU member states in the top 30 exporters of major conventional arms from 2001-2005 (SIPRI, 2006): Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. All are also in the top 30 of small arms exporters (Small Arms Survey, 2005). Other EU member states have only negligible levels of exports and are therefore excluded from the analysis.

15 The years have been chosen for practical and substantive reasons. Due to its traditionally secretive nature, arms transfer data has always been problematic. However, since transparency became an important issue in the 1990s, data has become more complete and is available though 2004. In addition, the end of the Cold War led to a great shift in the global arms trade, releasing its tight bipolar structure and resulting in a strong push for exports.

The transfer variable is dichotomous for three major reasons. First, measures of value and quantity are not comparable between data sources. SIPRI records major conventional arms transfers[16] using a unique "trend indicator value" (TIV), which measures the quantitative *and* qualitative value of military resources transferred, not solely their financial value[17] (2006: 560, 563). The Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT), on the other hand, lists small arms and light weapons (SALW) by total price paid and number of units, when reported.[18] Second, information on units and prices is not safely aggregated for export-import years within the NISAT database. NISAT lists every available record of SALW transfers for each export-import dyad year and will therefore list the same transfer more than once if it appears in more than one source, even though the records are not identified as duplicates. Adding reported values or units together therefore risks overstating the available data. Third, SALW cost less and have a higher volume of trade than major conventional weapons. The latter tend to be considerably more expensive and less frequently purchased. Thus one unit of major weapons transferred carries a radically different weight than one unit of SALW; moreover, that unit is likely to be significantly more expensive.

Major conventional weapons include aircraft, armored vehicles, artillery, radar systems, missiles, ships, and engines (SIPRI, 2006: 562). NISAT and the United Nations define small arms as "those weapons designed for personal use" and light weapons as "those designed for use by several persons serving as a crew" (United Nations, 1997: 11). Examples include revolvers, rifles, machine guns, and ammunition and explosives (11-12). Although the trade in major conventional weapons is often more high profile, it is important to include SALW for a complete picture of European arms transfers. Not only have SALW been singled out in recent years by NGOs and the international community for their role in human rights violations and ethnic conflict (Small Arms Survey, 2005; United Nations, 1997), but Europe as a region is their number one exporter (Small Arms Survey, 2005). SALW have also begun to attract increasing media attention and normative

16 I thank Mark Bromley at SIPRI for providing me with this data.

17 It is worth noting that SIPRI considers the financial value of arms transfers a poor measure at best. Often, reliable data on the financial value of a transaction is simply unavailable. In addition, the financial value, when it is known, is often not the complete value of the deal, which may also include support systems, integration items, and spare parts. Finally, credits, loans, and discounts are frequently unknown (SIPRI, 2006:563).

18 Both sources rely on public information for their data and therefore do not include covert or black market transfers unless the transfers have been declassified or otherwise reported in the public domain. The US Department of State provides the other major source of global arms transfer data in its World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers (WMEAT) project. However, it only reports individual country data for three major European suppliers (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) to a limited number of importers. Moreover, this data is aggregated by three-year segments; non-aggregate data for countries other than the United States is classified. See <http://www.state.gov/t/vci/rls/rpt/wmeat/> (last accessed February 2008) for the most recent report.

weight, even if the actual deals to sell major conventional weapons remain more frequently reported and criticized.

The key independent variable is the human rights record of the importing state, which the normative power perspective expects will negatively affect European arms transfers. I use the Political Terror Scale (PTS), which ranks states annually based on reports published by Amnesty International and the U.S. Department of State.[19] Countries "under a secure rule of law, [where] people are not imprisoned for their views, and torture is rare or exceptional" earn a score of one (73), while those countries where "murders, disappearances, and torture are a common part of life" for the entire population earn the maximum score of five (74). Although Amnesty and State Department scores in this sample are closely correlated (.8238), I follow Blanton (2005) and employ their average (*ptsave*). As the Human Security Centre (2005) notes, PTS coding is "inherently subjective;" however, data in recent years, including those in this analysis, benefit from more comprehensive reporting and more consistent coding. Moreover, "in the absence of any other data, [it] sheds much-needed light on a murky corner of human insecurity" (79).

I also include measures for democracy and conflict, in order to capture a broad range of normative power's role in shaping European arms transfers. The conflict variables are broken down into conflict type – interstate (*ct2*), internal (*ct3*), and internationalized (*ct4*) – and are discussed in an appendix following the conclusion. Again, normative power expects democracy to have a positive relationship with arms transfers and a negative relationship with conflict, whereas alternative perspectives expect increased demand from conflict to result in a higher volume of arms traded. Finally, I include three additional variables derived from alternative perspectives to account for arms trade patterns: alliance, military expenditures, and GDP per capita. Realists expect a positive correlation between alliances and arms transfers, while military expenditures and GDP per capita may point to the propensity of states to follow material motives and export to those recipients that are willing or able to commit a higher level of resources to purchase weapons. I describe these variables and their sources in further detail in the Data Appendix.

On their own, these additional variables need not detract from the emergent role of human rights in export decision-making: It is possible, for example, that *both* alliances and human rights are important explanatory variables. That is, exporting states may take into account both their alliance relationships and human rights; considering one does not automatically proscribe consideration of the other. However, it is also possible that

19 For a more detailed discussion of PTS coding, see Gibney and Dalton (1996).

controlling for these variables will negate or reverse the effects of the human rights variable. For instance, exporters may prove less cognizant of human rights as importers devote – or have the ability to devote – more resources to foreign arms procurement (i.e., increased military expenditures or increased GDP per capita). Such results would seriously limit the scope of the normative power perspective on this issue and, at worse, call into question the very validity of its foundations.

Results and Key Trends

The results of the analysis in favor of the EU's normative power, shown in tables 1 and 2, are mixed at best. On the one hand, human rights emerge as a significant factor in determining arms transfers, but the relationship is precisely the opposite of that expected by the normative power perspective. In fact, there is a positive correlation between PTS scores and arms transfers. That is, as human rights worsen (PTS scores increase), arms transfers are more frequent. The effect is similar for both the full sample and the non-OECD sample and could reflect a response to higher demand for arms in countries engaged in higher levels of internal repression. Interestingly, excluding GDP per capita from the model reverses the effect of human rights and shows a consistent negative relationship between poor human rights records and arms transfers.[20] This suggests that level of development, and perhaps the ability of the government and society to invest in arms, provides an opportunity for EU exporters to supply and trumps human rights in the process. Regardless, these findings deal a stinging blow to EU claims of normative power.

On the other hand, a comparison of the samples from 1990-1997, prior to the EU Code of Conduct, and 1998-2004 can be read as a confirmation of the growth of the EU's normative power role: The strength of this positive relationship decreases between the two periods, showing greater sensitivity to human rights concerns by EU exporters since the late 1990s.[21] Whether the Code is the cause or effect, trends in EU exports are changing. Democracy coefficients, moreover, indicate a positive significant – and increasingly strong – relationship between arms transfers and democracy from one time period to the next. With both of these variables, these changes are even more dramatic with non-OECD recipients. Thus, it appears as though the creation of common, norms-based export criteria at the EU-level is beginning to exert a degree of influence on EU mem-

20 Removing the other independent variables does not change the significance or direction of the results. It is only in dropping GDP per capita from the model that a negative relationship between human rights and arms transfers emerges. Due to space considerations, I do not report these additional findings here.

21 Wald tests confirm these as meaningful parameters in this sample division.

bers' collective export behavior. Nevertheless, the point cannot be escaped that the relationship between human rights and arms transfers continues to be positive and significant, in defiance of EU normative power.

Table 1: Results for All Recipients

Variable	1990-2004 (SE)	1990-1997 (SE)	1998-2004 (SE)
Military Expenditures	.000021** (5.12e-06)	3.48e-06 (3.83e-06)	.000078** (9.58e-06)
GDP/Capita	.00016** (5.83e-06)	.00016** (7.08e-06)	.00016** (9.58e-06)
Democracy	.06** (.003)	.051** (.004)	.067** (.005)
Human Rights	.279** (.026)	.396** (.035)	.105* (.041)
Conflict (*ct2*)	.231** (.047)	.347** (.065)	.12 (.069)
Conflict (*ct3*)	-.125** (.028)	-.178** (.038)	-.082 (.043)
Conflict (*ct4*)	-.143** (.033)	-.416** (.079)	-.093* (.041)
Alliance	1.207** (.088)	1.165** (.114)	1.322** (.142)
China (*chinahr*)	.176** (.056)	.254** (.076)	-.129 (.088)
Constant	-1.497** (.077)	-1.898** (.101)	-.948** (.123)
Pseudo R^2	0.2185	0.2193	0.2305
Obs	14226	7432	6794

* Significant at the .05 level; ** Significant at the .01 level.

Table 2: Results for Non-OECD Recipients

Variable	1990-2004 (SE)	1990-1997 (SE)	1998-2004 (SE)
Military Expenditures	.000034** (5.97e-06)	.000012 (5.89e-06)	.000089** (.000011)
GDP/Capita	.00018** (7.54e-06)	.00019** (.00001)	.00016** (.00001)
Democracy	.058** (.003)	.050** (.004)	.065** (.005)
Human Rights	.295** (.027)	.413** (.036)	.122** (.042)
Conflict (*ct2*)	.218** (.048)	.326** (.068)	.112 (.070)
Conflict (*ct3*)	-.144** (.029)	-.199** (.040)	-.096* (.044)
Conflict (*ct4*)	-.203** (.038)	-.404** (.079)	-.118** (.045)
Alliance	1.043** (.109)	.963** (.144)	1.31** (.178)
China (*chinahr*)	.113 (.058)	.234** (.078)	-.196* (.091)
Constant	-1.60** (.080)	-2.014** (.106)	-1.030** (.126)
Pseudo R^2	0.0968	0.0978	0.1058
Obs	11422	6058	5364

* Significant at the .05 level; ** Significant at the .01 level.

To better illustrate and account for these broad changes over time, I perform a moving-window analysis (Kwon and Pontusson, 2005), using a re-estimated model with five-year blocks, or "windows" to allow for a more nuanced treatment of the data. I start with a single-year regression in 1990, adding an additional year to each regression and building up to 11 consecutive five-year windows concluding in 2004. The results for human rights and democracy (figures 1 and 2) reflect the more static findings reported in the tables. Since the full sample and non-OECD samples show similar trends, only the former is reproduced here; I also include upper and lower 95 percent confidence intervals to supplement the regression coefficients.

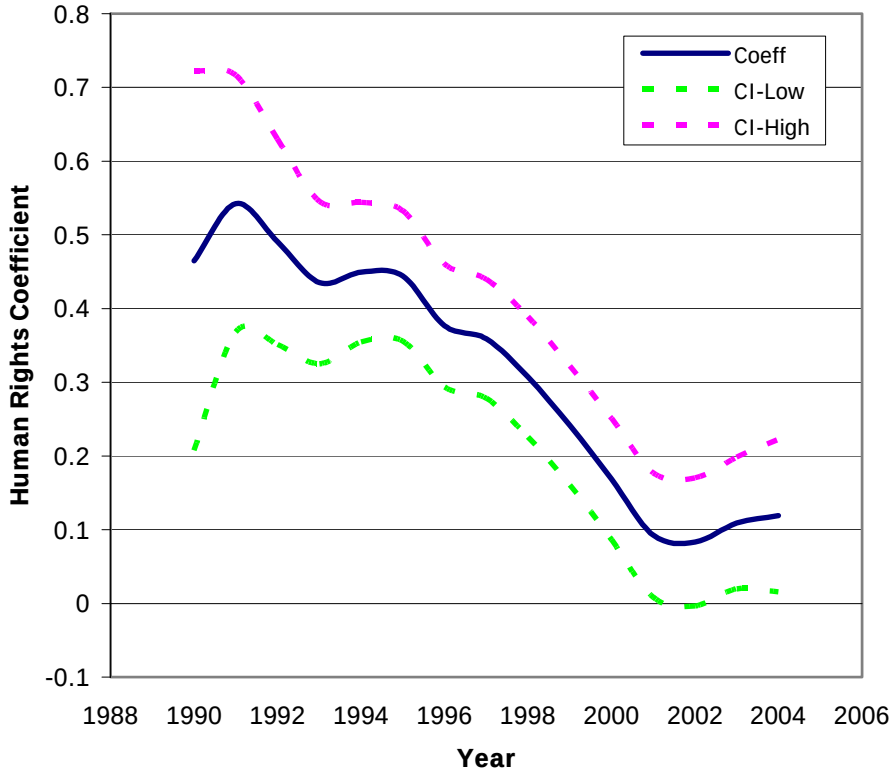

Figure 1: Influence of Human Rights on Arms Transfers (All Recipients)

Again, the continued and increasing importance of democracy over time is clear (figure 2). Moreover, it appears that although the EU does not live up to its human rights rhetoric, its practice may have begun to respond to formal policy (figure 1). The positive relationship between importers' poor human rights records and their receipt of arms shrinks after the early 1990s and drops steeply after 1998. It is also important to note that the upper confidence interval for human rights in later years moves below the lower confidence interval for earlier years. This confirms with certainty that the EU has become more responsive to human rights over time. Similar conclusions can be drawn for democracy, where the lower confidence interval moves above the higher confidence interval. Still, the upturn after 2002 shows that the EU may be backtracking on its earlier progress. The reasons for this possible shift are not yet clear, but may stem from emerging post-September 11 attitudes toward less restrictive arms exports led by the United States in its war on terror, and accompany what Manners (2006) laments as the EU's militarization of its normative power.

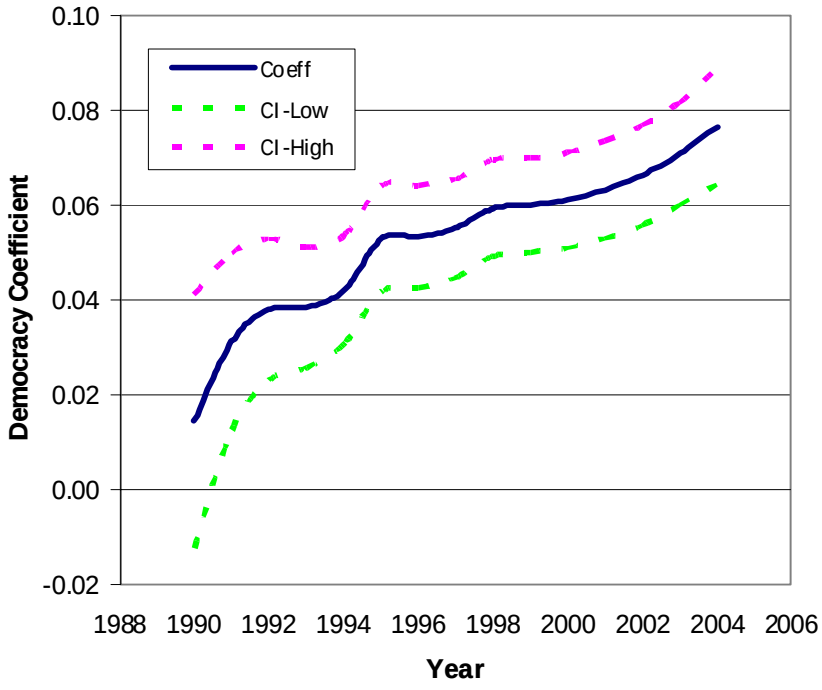

Figure 2: Influence of Democracy on Arms Transfers (All Recipients)

The control variables perform as expected and show significant positive results. The results for conflict, however, are also mixed. While internal (*ct3*) and internationalized conflict (*ct4*) are negatively correlated with transfers in support of the normative power perspective, interstate conflict (*ct2*) shows the opposite effect, possibly due to greater economic opportunities for trade. Although the EU Code of Conduct does not differentiate between types of conflict, this division may still be instructive. Sales during interstate conflicts, unlike the other types, may still be viewed as legitimate in accordance with the provision of the UN Charter allowing sovereign states to acquire the means to provide for their own defense. Certainly, the findings for internal and internationalized conflict represent a change from Cold War practices, when states attempted to influence such wars by selling weapons to their preferred sides.

Normative power emerges from these findings significantly weakened, though not refuted. The results support the EU's normative power in terms of democracy, internal, and internationalized conflict; however, the key variable of interest here, human rights, remains undecided in the most optimistic analysis. Responding to demand in available markets despite a recipient's poor human rights record still appears to drive EU arms transfers, and although these trends may be changing, export behavior continues to diverge from its normative aspirations. Even so, the existence of such changes in EU

export behavior in recent years indicates a need to examine factors of both material motivation and normative power to understand EU arms export practices. I now turn to the debate over the EU arms embargo against China, which both illustrates and magnifies these findings, while also underscoring intra-EU dissent over the exercise of its normative role.

THE EU ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST CHINA

In 1989, Europe and the United States imposed arms embargoes on China in response to its crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators at Tiananmen Square. Since 2003, the EU has seriously reconsidered the embargo, with some members arguing that it has outgrown its purpose.[22] Yet China's human rights record remains poor, and other members have strongly opposed such a move without real improvements. The debate has been extremely high profile, bringing into play EU economic interests and calling into question its status as a normative power. Although the embargo remains in place for the foreseeable future, the issue highlights underlying divisions about the EU's external role, as well as the significance of both normative power and economic interests in EU foreign policymaking. Drawing on newspaper accounts including interviews with politicians, NGO reports, official documents, and additional articles, this section has two aims. First, it demonstrates the need for an explanatory framework integrating material and non-material interests. Second, it suggests that normative power is more deeply embedded in the practices of some members than others as a result of domestic values and interests. This, in turn, presents substantial problems for the EU in creating and acting on a single identity in its foreign relations.

The Debate

Though improved since 1989, most experts maintain that China's human rights record remains poor (Amnesty, 2005b; DOS, 2005). Figure 3 illustrates China's continually poor human rights performance, especially in recent years. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (HRW) both point to continued violations of basic human rights, including torture and heavy-handed political and religious repression (Amnesty, 2004, 2005b; HRW, 2005). In its 2005 Annual Report, Amnesty notes that some improvements have been made, but that these exist alongside more widespread violations, including political crackdowns and arbitrary detentions (Amnesty, 2004). In addition, violence against women, detention of political activists and human rights defenders, repression of reli-

22 France, however, wished to remove the embargo on China as early as 1997 (Lewis, 1997).

gious groups, and the practice of torture in state institutions, persist (Amnesty, 2004, 2005b; DOS, 2005).

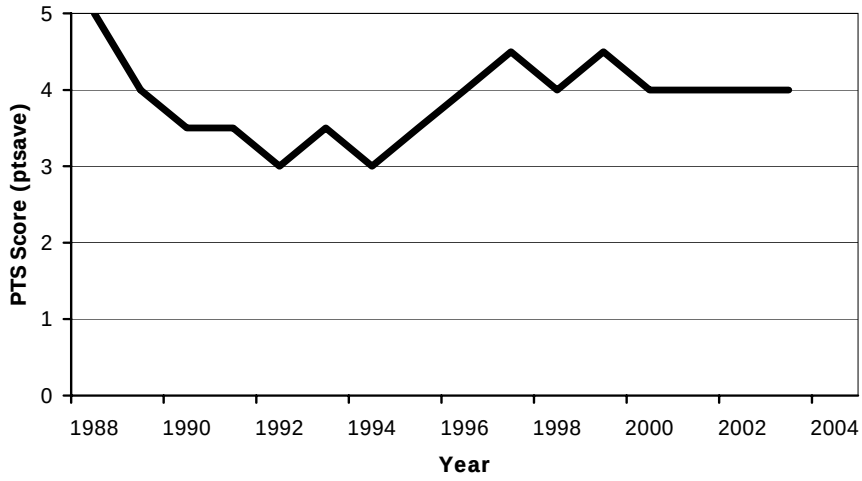

Figure 3: China's Human Rights Record (PTS Scores), 1989-2004

For many opponents of lifting the arms embargo, the point is therefore not "merely" that China continues to violate human rights standards, but also that many of the conditions that led to the imposition of the embargo in the first place still exist. What is more, the Chinese government continues to maintain it was justified in its use of force in 1989. Lifting the embargo would thus falsely signal that China had cleaned up its human rights act. This would reflect poorly on Europe's promotion of human rights abroad and, in effect, condone the continuation of China's current practices, when in fact political repression is still a regular occurrence, if less visibly violent (Amnesty, 2005b; Archick et al., 2005; DOS, 2005). In addition, Amnesty reports the detention or surveillance of many activists and dissidents in 2004 and 2005, apparently "to prevent them from engaging in public activities deemed sensitive by the authorities, including publicizing the impunity surrounding the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown" (2005b: 1). In the eyes of many, including governments in Ireland and Scandinavia, China has therefore neither sufficiently dealt with the legacy of 1989, nor has it consistently or thoroughly improved its human rights practices to merit lifting the embargo.

In addition to continued human rights problems, some governments oppose lifting the ban in order to maintain good relations with the United States. Great Britain and many East European members of the EU fall into this category. The United States has expressed strong disapproval over the prospects of lifting the embargo and has threat-

ened to disallow transfers of cutting-edge defense technology to Europe in response. Security interests are clearly behind its position: With the spread of advanced weapons technology to China – and its re-export elsewhere – the United States fears a challenge to its power in Asia and regional instability stemming from China-Taiwan tensions ("When Javier met Condi …," 2005). Indeed, US debates over Europe's proposed policies have focused on stability in Asia and American military security, mentioning human rights only briefly in passing. As a result, for these members, the harm to the transatlantic relationship – already suffering from the fallout over the recent Iraq war – and the potential damage to the arms industry outweigh the benefits of opening up the arms trade with China.

Conversely, proponents of lifting the ban cite the need to engage – not isolate – China, in order to socialize it further into the norms of the international community (Schröder, 2005). As a tool to coerce better human rights practices, the embargo has been largely ineffective. First, the embargo has not prevented China from legally importing arms (table 3). Within the EU, the embargo has been subject to national interpretation, allowing for the exploitation of perceived loopholes and the state-sanctioned transfer of various products (Anthony, 2005; Lindsey, 2005). From 1990-2005, unclassified reports alone count 27 acquisitions of military-related systems by China from Europe and other non-Russian suppliers, including dual-use technology. An additional 13 have been counted under negotiation (Archick et al., 2005).

Second, although European states appear to have become more sensitive to China's human rights practices in their recent exports, China has not made substantive improvements in its human rights record. An interaction term for China's human rights record (*chinahr*) included in the statistical analysis shows a positive relationship between its PTS scores and receipt of arms from 1990-1997, but a negative relationship from 1998-2004 (tables 1 and 2).[23] This suggests that Europe was more responsive to China's human rights performance in approving arms exports during the second period,[24] thus sharpening the debate between those wishing to lift the embargo and those wishing to maintain it. Nevertheless, despite some initial improvement in PTS scores in the early 1990s (3 to 3.5), scores since 1997 have hovered from 4 to 4.5 out of a maximum of 5 (figure 3). Thus for the same reason some argue to keep the embargo, proponents of removing it argue it may be time for a new approach, if any progress is to be made.

23 Recall that this analysis does not reflect volume or value of goods transferred, merely the existence of transfers from each exporting state.

24 Because member states are allowed to implement the embargo as they chose, this could be in part the result of some states continuing existing contracts in spite of the embargo but not renewing them once these contracts have later expired.

Table 3: Major Conventional Weapons Exported to China, 1989-2004

Year	Russia	USSR	Ukraine	Israel	France	Uzbekistan	Italy	USA	UK	Europe Total	Total
1989					35					35	35
1990		81		18	13		10			23	122
1991		151		18	12		16			28	197
1992	1096		42	18	8					8	1164
1993	772		55	18	5			1		5	851
1994	79		22	18	18		5			23	142
1995	376			18	15		11			26	420
1996	1066		73	18	22		5			27	1184
1997	545		73	18	15		3			18	654
1998	111		73	28	8					8	220
1999	1378		73	28	18		11	31	10	39	1549
2000	1694		77	18	8					8	1797
2001	2917		73	18	8		3			11	3019
2002	2379		113		9	85				9	2586
2003	1961		73		4					4	2038
2004	2161		73		4					4	2238

Figures are actual deliveries of major conventional weapons and are given in SIPRI trend-indicator values in millions of US dollars at 1990 prices.
Embargoing states are shaded gray. Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database (March 2005).

In addition, the legal opening and gesture of friendship resulting from an end to the embargo would bring tremendous opportunities for military and non-military trade. China has increased its defense budget exponentially since 1991 to an estimated $50-70 billion for 2003, making it a lucrative trading partner and since 2000 the world's largest importer of arms (Archick et al., 2005). It is also interested in obtaining advanced technological ability through co-development and co-production,[25] a potentially appealing option for European companies anticipating China as a low-cost competitor with high-skill industry (Anthony, 2005; Archick et al., 2005). In short, China's enormous defense budgets and shortage of technologically adept arms suppliers could make it a goldmine for European arms producers, otherwise trailing behind their US competitors (Archick et al., 2005; Lindsey, 2005).

These arguments may only mask broader economic goals, however. In fact, the arms industry has expressed some indifference to the issue – it does, after all, already trade legally with China. Removing the ban is not expected to affect business substantially. Even greater is industry concern for the US reaction. If the United States did curtail its technology sharing, the blow to European industry would be heavy and the future of joint projects, such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, would be in danger (Mulholland, 2005). European companies wish to deepen their relationship with the United States, not set it backward. When faced with a choice between Chinese trade and US cooperation, they have expressed a decided preference for the latter, its market shares, and its cutting-edge technology (Archick et al., 2005; Mulholland, 2005).

Perhaps more importantly then, lifting the embargo could lead to growth in non-military trade and substantial economic benefits for Europe far beyond the arms industry. Certainly, increased ties with China would be a boost to EU companies in general. Germany, for example, saw a 40% increase in exports to China in 2003, with a volume of $16 billion in exports and only a $2 billion deficit, while the US deficit with China continues to widen (Murphy, 2003). Indeed, in 2005 the EU was for the first time China's largest trading partner. A dependence on trade with China, the prospects of lucrative contracts, and the broader societal benefits – especially at a time of general European economic malaise – could thus be the impetus behind some members' desire to end the embargo (Archick et al., 2005; Bernstein, 2005; Lorenz, 2004).

25 Europe is an ideal partner for China. Though Russia is by far China's major supplier of military equipment, it does not possess the high quality technological ability China seeks. For example, the European GALILEO global satellite navigation program is scheduled to receive €200 million from China to partake in developing program applications (Anthony, 2005). Moreover, the fact that the EU considers China a partner instead of an emerging threat in spite of its increased military expenditures raises the possibility that some members see an unspoken secondary motive underlying the embargo debate: either to balance – if only implicitly – against a hegemonic United States or, alternatively, to establish itself as a full-fledged emerging power ("Don't Lift the Arms Ban …," 2004).

The Stalemate

Well into 2005, lifting the arms embargo was by all accounts an inevitable question of "not whether but when." However, with China's passage of its Anti-Secession Law for Taiwan in March 2005 and the election of Angela Merkel to replace Gerhard Schröder as German Chancellor in November 2005, the momentum to lift the embargo disappeared and with it the issue from the EU agenda. Yet the preservation of the embargo can only minimally be attributed to the persistence of the normative power of the EU. In fact, the embargo has remained more as a consequence of the EU's specific decision-making rules, requiring a unanimous decision to remove it, than any unified normative position. Member states have been deeply divided on this issue, reflecting fundamental differences in their domestic interests and the importance of normative considerations in foreign policymaking.

Certainly, the rhetoric and deliberations of the EU have taken human rights into consideration on all sides. On the one hand, this may reflect the importance of normative power throughout the EU. Whether to preserve international image or reduce internal dissonance resulting from the clash of normative values and material interests (Shannon, 2000), even the more market-oriented members have couched their position in normative terms. From this position, proponents of lifting the ban cite improvement in the Chinese human rights record and their commitment to strengthening the Code of Conduct with regard to barring the transfer of arms to countries with human rights violations more stringently and uniformly. In a testament to normative power, a moral dialogue has by no means been absent in EU deliberations. Mere window dressing or not, the point holds that all members have seen it fit and necessary to justify their actions on behalf of human rights and acknowledge it as the major concern in the debate.

On the other hand, this explanation falls back into the trap of allowing EU rhetoric to confirm its normative power status. While a concern for the credibility of normative power may explain the EU's attempts to reassure the European public of its promotion of human rights in China, these efforts have been seen as neither genuine nor effective. The assertion that China is today a different country is considered blatantly false throughout the press and human rights community. With regard to the EU's actions, further inconsistencies remain. For example, the EU has not provided China with real conditions to improve its record before the ban can be raised (Lorenz, 2004). In addition, claims that the Code of Conduct will prevent arms transfers to human rights violating countries are seen as unrealistic. In its current form, the Code fails to prevent such transfers and does not provide any real teeth to fall back on (Lindsey, 2005). Moreover, meaningful reform would be politically difficult. Rather, lifting the ban would expose the

EU as a partial representative of "universal" values, applying different standards to big powers (or at least big markets) than to small ones (Amnesty, 2005a).

Interestingly, the EU's internal divisions over the role of normative power in this case do not correlate with duration of membership. Those states most likely to be socialized into the EU's normative power and at the center of Europe's quest to promote this identity should be core, long-term members, such as France, Germany, and Italy. Yet it is precisely these three countries that have been at the forefront of the drive to lift the embargo. Conversely, it has been the newer members in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe – and arguably some of the lesser EU-enthusiasts – that have fought to keep the embargo. This suggests that basic differences between members in how they conceive their proper role in the world, as well as their domestic interests and values, are more influential in determining their positions on EU external policy than any sense, shared or otherwise, of EU external identity.[26]

Sweden, for example, has sought independently and with considerable success to establish itself as a normative power (Ingebritsen, 2002) and promotes a responsible, value-driven arms trade as a result. Nevertheless, its domestic debate over the China embargo reveals palpable tensions between the promotion of its material interests and the preservation of its national morality. In late 2004, former Prime Minister Göran Persson, likely lured by the prospects of expanding markets for Sweden's multinational firms, had planned to go to the parliament to endorse lifting the embargo (Ahlmark, 2005). However, he ultimately lacked the votes to support the move, which was broadly condemned as amoral and against Swedish values as an international human rights leader. The political and societal consensus instead strongly backed the embargo in order to protect the credibility of Sweden, the EU, and their joint commitment to human rights (Ahlmark, 2005; Kina Kräver, 2004). As a result, Sweden opposed the lifting of the embargo.

France and Germany, in contrast, have been vocal supporters of lifting the embargo. This position has not been a difficult one for France, which has traditionally supported the interests of its arms manufacturers overseas (Gold, 1999) and has not been shy in promoting its economic stake in the Chinese arms trade (Lewis, 1997). Unlike Sweden, France identifies less with normative power in its own foreign policy and has long placed greater value on promoting its international status through material means,

26 In one sense, this reinforces Zürn and Checkel's (2005) call to scholars to attend to domestic politics in their studies of European integration. In another sense, however, it may simply support a static version of domestic politics as an integration constraint, which they seek to replace with more dynamic views of domestic-supranational interaction. Further research across issue areas is necessary to parse out answers to these complex questions. Certainly findings here are skeptical of the depth of European socialization to date, in favor of stronger, more entrenched pressures of national identity (Checkel, 2001) and domestic interests (Schimmelfennig, 2005).

including its arms trade (Kolodziej, 1987). The German position is more complex. Germany under former Chancellor Schröder was a primary mover of lifting the embargo. Nevertheless, the debate saw Schröder isolated from the public and parliament on the issue. While public sentiment reflects a post-war identity that has downplayed military power and promoted a comparatively rule-guided arms trade, this identity is now arguably in flux. Schröder and a new generation of policymakers have sought a more active international role for Germany, in which Schröder was willing to buck public opinion and pursue an end to the embargo. Thus the persistence of *civilian* power has introduced questions of identity in German foreign policy discourse, leaving the potential for economic and military motivations[27] to factor more strongly into Schröder's decision-making calculus (Bernstein, 2005; Lindsey, 2005; Lorenz, 2004).

The embargo is maintained because of these differences in national values and interests. If qualified majority voting applied, then perhaps the larger anti-embargo states could push through their preferred policy. However, the embargo remains not because the EU has made a unanimous or even majority decision in favor of a strong normative power position, but because decision-making rules require unanimity to lift the embargo. This suggests that Moravcsik's (1998) emphasis on national preferences to explain EU policymaking may be well employed in the area of EU foreign policy. In this case, it appears as though EU policy – or lack of change in policy – has been determined by a combination of policymaking rules at the EU level and policy preferences at the national level. These national preferences, in turn, reflect differences in the importance and practice of normative power, stemming from differences in domestic politics, material power, and national foreign policy practices unconnected to European integration. As Checkel (2006) notes, EU studies often neglect a systematic examination and theorization of domestic politics to the EU's detriment. Certainly, even an initial look at the China embargo case confirms that it is a necessary component to understanding the complex dynamics at the supranational level.

This also drives home the point that both material and non-material interests are central to this debate and wrapped up in the development of European external identity more broadly. As Zürn and Checkel (2005) put it, it is not a question of an "either/or" battle between rationalism and constructivism, but rather one of "both/and," in which both perspectives can and should be employed to explain the empirical question at hand. By ignoring this, the normative power perspective reduces both its usefulness and its

27 Separate from his domestic constituency, Schröder's position suggests that he may have wished, in addition to economic benefits, to establish the EU as a "big" power to balance against the United States, or at least to establish its foreign policy as independent from the superpower, in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion.

credibility as an analytical tool. While each member's embargo policy may result from a cost-benefit calculation of the available options in light of its interests and values (Schimmelfennig, 2005), the options themselves may be constrained by national identity, just as the EU's normative power delimits the terms of the debate (Checkel, 2001; Katzenstein et al., 1998). Thus clear dividing lines between value-driven and materialist foreign policy may be useful ideal types but are artificial and counterproductive analytical categories in practice; both normative and material interests inform state preferences and contribute to EU policymaking. Moreover, they are not afforded equal weight by member states; rather, variation in member state policy is tied in with the variation in relative importance granted to each.

Clearly, the definition of EU external identity remains unresolved. As the wide variation in national preferences displayed in EU policymaking indicates, normative power may be only one option amidst many, including a well-established economic power and a potential military power.[28] Indeed, it may be more appropriate to speak of European external identit*ies*, rather than a single identity. Despite their shared normative rhetoric, EU members have not arrived at a stable consensus on the relationship of normative and material power in the practice of their arms transfer policy. Broad trends indicate that normative power may be gaining ground as it becomes more established in EU foreign policy rhetoric and institutions. Yet it is held neither widely nor deeply enough to uniformly or consistently shape member behavior, and the diversity of national identities and interests suggests this situation will not solve itself quickly or easily. Moreover, if one group begins to emphasize material power more overtly, debates such as those over the China embargo will likely become more intense and more frequent, as divisions between members about the proper role of Europe in the world become increasingly evident and relevant.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

What is clear from this analysis is that Europe is still debating its collective role in world politics, particularly in the security realm. State sovereignty and state interests continue to be very real concerns and not easily relinquished, even if the EU's legitimacy as an actor is undermined in the process. On the one hand, Europe's normative power does on the surface seem to be a point of agreement between EU members. Moreover, it appears as though the importance of human rights in Europe's external relations has grown over time. On the other hand, Europe's normative power should by no means be taken as a

28 Manners (2006) discusses the consequences of the potential militarization of the EU for its normative power.

given and perhaps should be viewed with a critical eye. As both the statistical analysis and case study show, there is more to Europe's external power projection than normative influence.

The statistical results illustrate a surprising finding for advocates of the normative power perspective. Although human rights appear to have become more important to arms export decision making in recent years, countries with poor human rights records are still frequently on the receiving end of arms deals. Thus while normative considerations in the form of democracy and conflict engagement do emerge as significant determinants of Europe's arms export behavior, especially since the late 1990s, economic factors often overshadow human rights considerations. And as both human rights concerns and pressures to export continue to grow, so too will Europe's conflicts of material and normative interests.

The China arms embargo case magnifies these issues and presents serious underlying difficulties in achieving a single, coherent European foreign policy. In many respects, China is admittedly an exceptional case. Its economic power and enormous market potential open it up to both special interest and special treatment from European states. In contrast, the 1990 European arms embargo to Burma, with its tiny isolated economy and poor human rights record, has remained in place with little controversy. The China case has instead been extremely high profile, even without having gone to a vote in the Council of Ministers, and the debate is important for the credibility of the EU's normative power status. EU members have all sought to justify their positions on the issue in terms of concern for human rights in China, yet the case reveals a deeper complexity to European external relations and the continued importance of material considerations in EU policymaking. The coexistence of these motives, however, may dilute the EU's ability to act as a moral authority, especially when it uses normative concerns to justify opposing sides of the same policy debate – and even more to mask its material interests.

The implications for EU foreign policy are threefold. First, there is a basic need to attend to domestic politics and national foreign policy preferences to understand EU external relations. This should not be surprising, but it remains an important point that is often overlooked by the normative power perspective. Member positions on the China issue in particular do not seem to emerge from socialization into EU norms through supranational interaction as might be expected. Rather, in the realm of foreign and security policy, both domestic material interests *and* pre-existing national identities are far more capable in explaining EU policy. Certainly, arms transfer policy, largely reserved for the national policy domain, is a hard case for any unified EU position. However, empirical tests of normative power are beginning to (and should) explore a range of policy issues, from easy to hard cases. Moreover, arms exports are an area of increasing suprana-

tional activity in which members all see a need, at a minimum, to defend their actions on behalf of human rights. The EU has begun to invest political and institutional resources in a coordinated, norm-driven arms export policy, and, to a limited extent, practice is shifting to reflect this investment. Beyond this, however, domestic politics remain central in setting the terms of the debate, as well as the ability of the EU to move forward with its arms transfer policy.

Second, it suggests that EU foreign policy incorporates both material and non-material power. Although the normative power perspective draws valuable attention to the latter, it discounts the former and in doing so, limits itself as an explanatory framework. European arms transfers exhibit multiple aspects of power, at times pressuring the EU and its member states to act in contradictory directions. Despite the EU emphasis on peace and human rights in its arms transfer policy, members' commitment to these values in practice has – until now – been less clear. As this analysis shows, normative considerations have grown over time but have varied by member state and have not supplanted material motivations behind the arms trade. Economic factors, as well as more subtle military power concerns, strongly affect arms transfer policy, even when norms claim the public spotlight. Moreover, norms may be set aside or conveniently re-interpreted when they work against other more tangible state interests. Focusing solely on normative power is misleading, just as the military power emphasis of more traditional security studies frameworks is insufficient. Instead, engaging in more integrative "both/and" analyses is likely to provide a more fruitful path for future research on Europe's foreign relations.

Finally, these findings indicate that the search for a single European external identity will be frustrating at best. Across discrete policy areas and within them, Europe presents a multifaceted identity, which is not easily reduced to a largest common denominator, much less a unanimous definition. Instead, it may be more appropriate to speak of multiple European identities and to investigate where and when the different economic, military, and normative dimensions of these identities operate more strongly than others. The European arms trade is truly at the crossroads of these identities and amply serves to illustrate the challenging position the EU finds itself in as a result. Even if norms at times serve an instrumental purpose, their use must nevertheless be seen by others to be legitimate in order for the application of those norms to be effective. As Bretherton and Vogler (2006) note, "Expectations are important, and behaviour judged to be incongruent or cynical can result in loss of credibility" (40). The European arms industry can equip Europe to take a leading role in world politics. Yet its exports may also undermine the EU's position as a global advocate of human rights and, along with that, its influence as a normative power. Ultimately, Europe may be faced with the insoluble dilemma that it

needs both material and normative power to be effective in contemporary international affairs, but as a result undermines its effectiveness by their very coexistence.

DATA APPENDIX

In addition to human rights, I include a number of additional independent variables in the statistical analysis, each obtained from widely used datasets in the field that cover the years of analysis in question. The democracy variable (*polity2*) comes from the Polity IV dataset, which ranks regime characteristics annually for each country from –10 to 10 (strongly autocratic to strongly democratic). For conflict, I use the Uppsala/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, which provides four types of annual conflict data through 2004 and measures conflict intensity within each type. Types of conflict include extra-state (*ct1*), interstate (*ct2*), internal (*ct3*), and internationalized (*ct4*).[29] Since there are no instances of extra-state conflict in the dataset, I drop this variable from the analysis. Conflict intensity starts at zero (no conflict) and ranges from one (25 battle-related deaths; minor conflict) to three (more than 1000 deaths; full-fledged war). Internal and internationalized conflicts are between a state and opposition group, the latter type with the addition of outside intervention. Interstate conflicts are between two or more states (Gleditsch et al., 2002). ATOP, the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions Project (Leeds, 2005), provides the variable for formal alliance (*atopally*), available through 2003, unlike Correlates of War alliance measures, which runs only through 2000. Military expenditures (*milexpusd*)[30] are reported by SIPRI in 2003 constant U.S. dollars, and GDP per capita (*ungdpcap*) is taken from the United Nations Statistics Division.

29 See Human Security Centre (2005) for the benefits of using Uppsala/PRIO data.

30 See annual yearbooks or <http://www.sipri.org> (last accessed March 2008) for data.

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